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ABSTRACT

Some evidence from the school-restructuring literature indicates that traditional school leadership behaviors and school-based management (SBM) are incongruent. Collaborative relationships between teachers and school leaders are problematic when teachers' duties and performance appraisals are hierarchically decided by school leaders. This paper describes current site-based management reforms, examines current site-based practices in relation to school leadership roles, and suggests ways to redefine school leadership roles and behaviors for successful SBM. Thirty Tennessee principals in schools that had implemented SBM were surveyed about their leadership roles. Findings indicate that principals were ambivalent about their new roles. Sixty-four percent described their leadership roles as ill-defined and misunderstood. Principals reported that they wanted to help teachers adjust to SBM, yet they were reluctant to relinquish authority to teachers. Seventy-three percent said that they felt unprepared as an administrator for SBM. A conclusion is that SBM cannot be successfully implemented unless school leaders are prepared to adopt democratic styles of leadership. (Contains 3 figures, 1 table, and 32 references.) (LMI)

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REDEFINING SCHOOL LEADERSHIP ROLES FOR SITE-BASED MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

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ABSTRACT

Traditionally, school leaders are trained with models based on bureaucratic theory (Weber, 1957), and they are expected to function within bureaucratic structures (Tyack, 1974). Historically, educational reform movements have defined leadership roles to incorporate regulatory mechanisms which centralize authority within the leadership role. Recent educational reforms call for new approaches to leadership. However, as these current reforms accentuate site-based management (SBM) systems, school leaders are somewhat ambivalent about these new conceptual approaches to leadership i.e., the shift from bureaucratic leadership models to democratic (SBM) models of leadership. A consistent element in these changing conceptions of leadership is that despite educational reform and school restructuring, principals maintain regulatory control of their teaching staff through teacher performance evaluations.

Some evidence from the restructuring literature indicates that traditional school leadership behaviors and SBM are incongruent, because collaborative relationships between teachers and school leaders are problematic when teachers duties and performance appraisals are hierarchically decided by school leaders. This observation has been verified by an exploratory study which documented principals' uncertainty about their leadership roles when SBM is introduced at their schools. The study surveyed 30 principals and 32% understood their leadership roles. Conversely, 64% of the principals indicated that their leadership roles were ill-defined or ambiguous.

Leadership behavior is a function of roles and expectations. Organizational change, including the shift to SBM, cannot occur without changes in leadership style. This paper is based upon the proposition that site-based management systems cannot be successfully implemented unless leaders are prepared to adopt democratic styles of leadership. Dimensions of reorganized structures are analyzed in relationship to elements of leadership styles that accomplish organizational goals (SBM). The paper concludes with an exploration of the changing conceptions of school leaders' roles and behaviors. The authors suggest new approaches to leadership which can re-inforce school-based management objectives.

Introduction

It can hardly be argued that education reforms during the 80s and 90s are replete. Reforms have shaped every facet of school and classroom operations. However, reform inception have also ushered in a wave of controversies, contradictions, and challenges as to how schools can be restructured to achieve educational excellence.

It is well documented throughout the literature that the reform movement of the 80s created a rhetorical squabble among educators. Purportedly, proponents viewed the reforms as accountable and measurable. Increased standards were the pivotal focus for change and accountability. On the other hand, opponents viewed the reforms as bureaucratic caveats that legislated, standardized, and regulated principals, teachers, and students. Schools were organized with traditional hierarchial structures that defined professional roles. Teachers were expected to adhere to state-mandated curriculum and performance standards, while principals were expected to be the "gatekeepers" of reforms. Thus, many regulatory reforms merely separated school leaders from teachers. Moreover, the reforms produced disappointing results with students. To opponents, the reforms of the 80s had promised much but delivered less than expected (Futrell, 1989; Timar & Kirp, 1989). Implicit in both views, however, was the need to initiate public school changes to achieve educational excellence.

The education reform debacle of the 80s quickly gave rise to current reform movement of the 90s. There is a growing emphasis on restructuring schools to improve the quality of education and

student achievement. Yet, as with past reform concepts, the restructuring movement is also plagued with controversies, contradictions, and challenges. Restructuring skeptics frequently view the reforms as pseudo, mythical, and political (Raywid, 1990; Timar, 1989).

There seems to be a wide consensus among educators and parents that school improvement can be achieved best at the grassroots of the local level. However, restructuring concepts are crunched with varied ideas, interpretations, and implement nations. A cursory review of current restructuring literature reveals the most popular school reform is the concept of organizing schools with shared decision-making structures. School-based, commonly known as site-based management (SBM), is considered the best approach to decentralize administrative authority. Part of this restructuring logic suggests educational problems can be solved best at the local school site with local administrators, teachers, parents, and community as primary decision makers of educational programs.

Although there is limited empirical evidence verifying that site-based management systems effectuate teacher performance and student learning, some schools and school districts report success stories. For example, the reform literature reports that school systems in California, North Carolina, and South Carolina are experiencing restructuring successes with school-based reforms (Doyle & Pimentel, 1993; Ginsberg & Berry, 1990; Timar & Kirp, 1989). Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to (1) describe current restructuring reforms with site-based management; (2)

examine current site-based practices in relation to school leadership roles, and (3) suggest redefining school leadership roles and behaviors for site-based management success.

Site-Based Transformations: Historical Realities

Historically, public school systems have been organized with hierarchial structures with professional roles clearly defined and delineated. School leaders functioned in concert with bureaucratic norms. That is, leadership behaviors were that of controlling, regulating, maintaining, monitoring, and evaluating. The classical view of principals was centralized figures with decision-making authority. Teachers were viewed as subordinates who needed to be managed and monitored by principals. As previously stated in this paper, reforms of the 80s clearly enunciated bureaucratic expectancies. While teachers inherited performance and meritorious standards, principals assumed "gatekeeping" roles to enforce state reform mandates. Therefore, it is not surprising why layers of bureaucratic structures remain, and why bureaucratic leadership behaviors remain partially unchanged in site-based management systems. Figure 1 presents a comparison between bureaucratic and democratic leadership behaviors.

Another historical reality can be seen with traditional preparation programs for school leaders (Duke, 1988). The administrative practice to function bureaucratically also parallels with preparation programs. Typically, administration programs often reflected fundamental hierarchial ideologies. Such

ideologies prepared school leaders within bureaucratic frameworks that shaped their systematic behaviors. As a result, school leaders have developed regulatory behaviors, primarily due to preparation with bureaucratic theories that accentuated high-order management and leadership control.

TRADITIONAL	CONTEMPORARY
BUREAUCRATIC BEHAVIORS	DEMOCRATIC BEHAVIORS
Authoritative	Democratic
Controlling	Empowering
Evaluating	Collaborating
Independent	Interdependent
Maintaining	Supporting
Monitoring	Encouraging
Regulating	Sharing

Figure 1. **A comparison between bureaucratic and democratic leadership behaviors**

Structural Characteristics of Site-Based Management Systems

A snapshot of site-based systems reveals they typically have similar organizational strands. Traditional hierarchial structures are transformed to resemble decentralized shared-governance models. The components of site-based management systems have unilateral, authoritative and democratic features. Typically, there is a clear delineation of authority and responsibility. Site-based systems are designed to function as interactive and participatory units that empower local educators and communities. Administrators, teachers, parents, and lay citizens have a unilateral and egalitarian position with school decisions. Semantically, the decision-making team is an extended governing board, advisory team, or local council.

Functional Roles

The decision-making structures, roles, and functions tend to vary. For example, restructuring reforms in Chicago are organized with Local School Councils. Group members of the council have different functional roles. While the teachers have autonomy to select principals and teachers, the parent council has the autonomous power to hire and fire principals, as well as approve budget and school plans. Teachers also have advisory responsibilities with curriculum and instructional decisions. Principals are empowered to make budgetary decisions, as well as hire and fire teachers (Bryk et al., 1994; Walberg & Niemiec, 1994). By contrast, restructuring reforms in Kentucky are rooted

in state mandates with a different decentralized structure. School-based decision making bodies in Kentucky are organized at each school. As with the Chicago council, Kentucky school councils make autonomous decisions about selecting principals and teachers, but it also makes staff decisions. A striking functional difference with Kentucky is more autonomous power with budgets and policy making with curriculum, staff time, student assignment, schedule, school space, instructional issues, discipline, and extracurricular activities (David, 1994).

Problematic Issues and Concerns Associated with Site-Based Management

Despite restructuring efforts and some successes with site-based management, it should not be overlooked that internal and external problems with the reorganized structure still exist (Lieberman et al., 1991). For example, Chicago schools are still experiencing some difficulties with restructuring implementation. According to Walberg & Niemiec (1994), restructuring reforms in Chicago have not effectuated school improvement. In other instances, structural changes have occurred, but traditional roles and behaviors have remained (Timar, 1989).

As schools continue to respond to restructuring reforms utilizing site-based management systems, it is obvious that some limited and questionable assumptions still exist. A growing body of literature on site-based management indicates decentralization is a significant organizational feature of the SBM concept. Many conventional reformers believe decentralization will improve the

organizational culture of schools. Thus, much attention is given to designing shared-governance structures, particularly between school leaders and teachers. Unfortunately, very little attention has been given to identifying what set of leadership behaviors are needed to create and maintain site-based environments. Moreover, there have been few attempts to retrain school leaders for shared-governance roles, particularly when most school leaders have been prepared to enter hierarchial organizations.

Problematic Assumptions

What is disturbing about shared-governance models is the juxtaposition of the participants seems paradoxical for school administrators, as well as teachers. School based decisions are shared, but hierarchial decisions with accountability are not. If one were to carefully examine some theoretical decentralized concepts with practical outputs, it is easy to identify critical decentralized gaps. Such gaps are largely due to several inherent assumptions about site-based management systems. Concurrently, there are missing leadership elements that need to be included in site-based management systems. For example, the following inherent assumptions have caused reformists to primarily focus on structural images and functional roles for school-based decisions:

- Professionals prefer to work in decentralized environments. Thus, they can automatically make the transition from centralization to decentralization.
- Changing bureaucratic-management structures to team-management structures will empower teachers and encourage principals to share governing authority.

- Empowering teachers will equip them with the same decision-making skills that principals have learned and developed.
- After decades of teachers and principals being tracked into separate and distinct roles, they can collaborate to achieve educational goals.
- School leaders can easily transform from bureaucratic leaders to team or collegial leaders.
- School leaders are prepared to assume new roles and functions in site-based management systems. Thus, they are willing to share traditional bureaucratic authority and responsibilities.

Within the framework, clearly, authority and responsibility are disseminated and shared across the local community when decentralization models are implemented. One inherent assumption is behavioral changes are automatic when decision-making structures are changed. Another decentralized assumption is teacher empowerment, participatory decision making, and collegial partnerships will emerge with reorganized structural patterns. The antithesis is, of course, rearranging people in the organization does not eradicate bureaucratic values, beliefs, and behaviors. Timar & Kirp (1989) observed decentralized reforms in Texas and California. They compared current decentralized and past centralized structures and concluded that restructuring reforms merely exist on paper. To a degree, local reforms remain shaped by traditional political structures. That is, bureaucratic tenets exist within teacher performance and meritorious subsystems. Prevailing bureaucracy can further be seen with congruent

leadership behaviors with hierarchial decisions, despite participatory management beliefs. In a political context, school leaders structure teachers' work with class, lunch, and planning time, as well as assignment of students. Futrell (1989) pointed out the difficulties with teachers preparing students within democratic participatory environments, while being subject to autocratic bureaucracy. Parenthetically, decentralization has caused problems and frustrations with teachers and school leaders. Principals, as well as teachers, are ambivalent about their new roles. Frequently, school leaders fear relinquishing and sharing control and power, and teachers fear possessing and exercising autonomy. It is difficult for both teachers and principals to make the decentralized transition. On one hand, principals and teachers function as collegial partners with school-based decisions. Suddenly, this relationship is disrupted with principals' autonomy with instructional decisions. There are clear discrepancies between site-based management beliefs and practices, mainly due to overlooked transformation difficulties and the failure to help school leaders develop a new set of behaviors congruent with site-based management (Fullan & Miles, 1992).

Toward a New Definition and Conceptualization of School Leadership

Much of site-based management concepts strongly suggest democratic and interactive leadership behaviors that integrate people into decision-making environments, encourage and support participatory behaviors from teachers. A significant determinant

of site-base effectiveness is how well people come together to achieve common educational goals. Another critical element is what leaders do to create and maintain participatory environments.

The authors posit school leaders are the impetus for educational organizations, and the leadership behaviors are the foundation that shape the structure. Therefore, the behaviors of participants in the organization should be congruent with structural characteristics of site-based management systems. Our position is grounded in Hemphill's (1958) theory of leadership acts within administrative leadership frameworks. Hemphill (1958) defines acts as sequential behaviors that occur in three phases: (1) intention formulation with realizing a state of affairs; (2) operation governed by intention, and (3) comparison of the intended with the realized state of affairs (a monitoring process). He further defines behavior as any change in an object or organism with respect to its environment. Significantly, interaction, structure, group, and leadership acts are key theoretical concepts that reciprocally influence the organizational unit. In light of these definitions, several assumptions about site-based management systems are partially emanated from Hemphill's (1958) theory of leadership.

- If participatory, collegial, and team partners are significant determinants of shared-governance structures, interactive and interdependent roles and behaviors of participants are essential. Thus, we can assume a collegial relationship between all participants in the system is a function of interactive and interdependent behaviors.

- When participants view themselves and others in the organization as colleagues and team partners with school-based decisions, site-based management structures can be clearly identified with shared authority and responsibility.

- When participants feel integrated and connected to decentralized structures, participatory decision making will increase.

- If shared-decision making is a significant element underlying site-based management systems, school leaders are willing to share authority and responsibility.

- The more school leaders demonstrate democratic and participatory styles of leadership, the more decentralized the organizational structure becomes.

- As centralized decision-making decrease, decentralized decision-making will increase. Thus, site-based systems are easily identifiable.

- If site-based management systems are shared-governance contexts, school leaders are willing to develop leadership and management behaviors compatible with the structure.

- The more school leaders demonstrate shared-decision making behaviors with participants, the more participatory decision making will increase.

- When educational administration programs recognize a need to accentuate decentralized governance also, school leaders will gain confidence to lead restructuring reforms.

Given these assumptions, organizational change cannot be mutually exclusive from traditional leadership change.

Required School Leadership Roles for Site-Based Management Success

Further employing Hemphill's (1958) theory of administrative leadership, leadership role is viewed in terms of leadership acts that are consistent, yet, different from interactions of group members. That is, the school leader's behaviors determine the role. The leader is identified by successful leadership acts that differ from other members in the organization.

It is evident from site-based structures that the school leader's role is that of a leadership partner, team partner, team builder, colleague, and facilitator, while maintaining a high sense of leadership. Figure 2 presents a graphic illustration of site-based leadership roles. Site-based management systems require principals to be willing and committed to assuming these roles with teachers, as well as parents. The willingness and commitment to assume atypical leadership roles with teachers are critical, if site-based is going to work. For example, teacher empowerment, an embraced site-based notion, places leaders in a collegial role.

There is a general consensus that teachers should be recognized and respected as equal partners with school-based decisions (Conley & Bacharach, 1990; Wellins et al.,1991). Conversely, however, some teachers continue to feel isolated and in some cases alienated from educational decision-making processes. Rather than perceiving a collegial relationship with principals an adversarial one is perceived (Martin, 1990; Lieberman, 1988; Lieberman & Miller, 1984). There is some documented evidence from the literature that principals have difficulties accepting and

understanding their leadership role in nonhierarchial organizations. For example, Etheridge, et al., (1990) found dominant principal control with site-based implementations. In some cases, principals are unwilling or unprepared to share leadership responsibilities with teachers (Conley, 1988; Conley & Bacharach, 1990). Thus, conflict and mistrust of school leaders make it difficult for principals to assume collegial roles with teachers. Principals who do want a collegial role are often uncertain about how to share the responsibility with teachers (Conley & Bacharach, 1990; Maeroff, 1993).

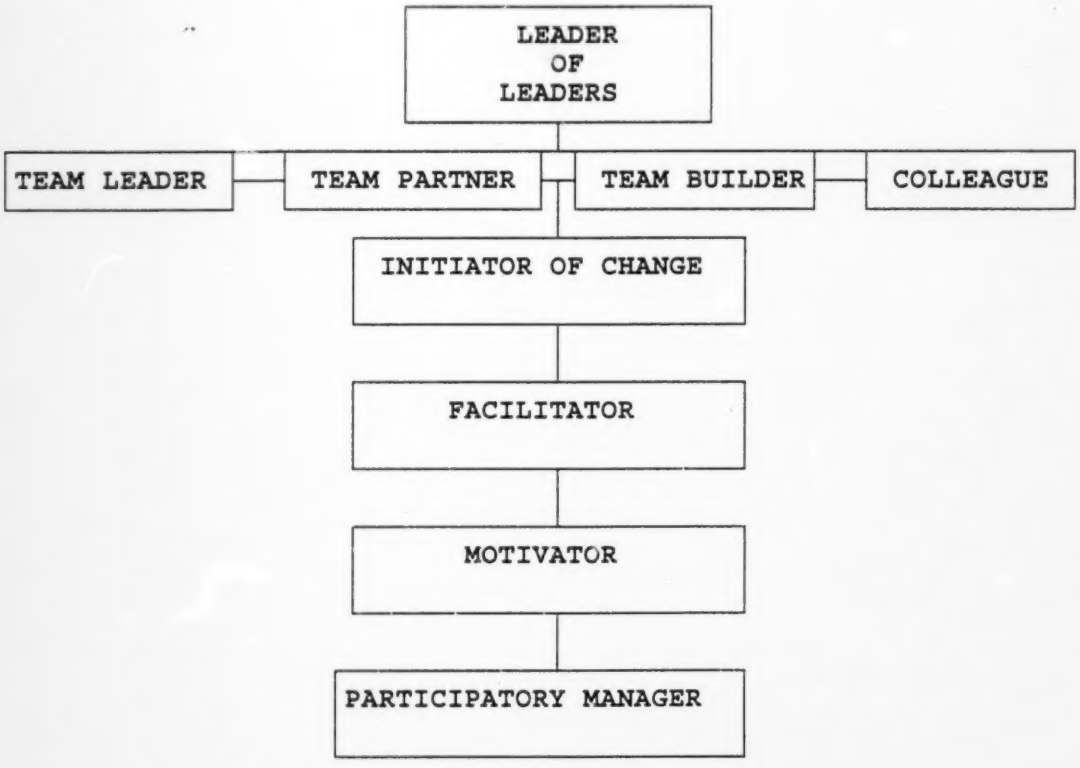


Figure 2. **Proposed school leadership roles within site-based management systems**

This leadership role ambivalence was also supported with some findings from a research study conducted by the authors. Thirty Tennessee principals who have been involved with site-based implementations in their schools responded to a survey about their leadership roles. The principals responded to a 5-point Likert-type scale of agreement that measured their sense of leadership roles and responsibilities with site-based implementation, leadership role conflict, preferred leadership roles and responsibilities, shared governance attitude, leadership preparation with site-based management, and school district support As shown in Table 1, all 30 principals in site-based management schools felt they should be the leader with implementing site-based management. Ninety-seven percent felt site-based success depended on the effective leadership of the principal. On the other hand, the results also indicated that principals are ambivalent about their new roles within some organizational structures. That is, 64% of the principals felt their leadership role with site-based management was ill-defined and misunderstood, and 80% of them said it was frustrating to be a site-based and instructional leader. In fact, more principals (70%) wanted to spend more time on instructional leadership than site-based leadership.

The data also revealed that the principals want to help teachers adjust to site-based; yet, 70% are reluctant to relinquish authority to teachers. This shared-governance dilemma is largely due to inadequate administration preparation and support from school district leaders. A majority of the principals (73%)

felt unprepared as an administrator for site-based management systems. In fact, 57% of the principals said educational administration programs do not adequately prepare prospective principals for practical leadership roles. All the principals (N = 30) strongly agreed and agreed that educational administration programs should prepare principals for site-based management systems. Similarly, school district leaders have failed to prepare principals for site-based transitions. Only 20% of the principals agreed they had central office help with leadership transitions.

It was also interesting to note that when the principals were asked to identify three important responsibilities associated with their leadership role, fifty-three percent (N=16) identified instructional leadership as most important. Supporting faculty and creating a positive school environment was the second most important responsibility. School-based management ranked only third as the most important.

In addition to participatory leadership roles in the organization, school leaders have to assume other important roles. The school leader's role is to initiate the necessary changes and interactions for a site-based management systems. With restructuring changes, the leadership roles are a leader of leaders, participatory manager, facilitator, and motivator. To be an effective leadership role model within site-based management, participants in the organization must see leadership behaviors that are congruent with the leadership roles.

Table 1

Percentage of Principals' Perceptions of Leadership Role with Site-Based Management

Perception	N	%
Leadership Role & Responsibilities		
Leader with SBM implementation	30	100
Helping teachers adjust to SBM	30	100
SBM success depends on effective leadership	29	97
Leadership Role Conflict		
Helping teachers with improving instruction than meeting for site-based	24	80
Frustrating to be site-based and instructional leader	24	80
More time on instructional leadership than site-based	21	70
Leadership role is ill-defined and misunderstood	19	64
Leadership Preference		
Instructional leadership as primary function	30	100
School-based management as primary function	17	57
Shared-Governance Attitude		
Teachers should have authority with their professional growth	28	93
Principal should have authority with school decisions	21	70
Site-based Leadership Preparation		
Ed.Admin. Prog. should prepare for site-based leadership	30	100
Not prepared for site-based	22	73
Ed.Admin.Prog. prepare leaders for practical roles	6	20
SBM Leadership Support from District		
SBM transition help	6	20

Suggested School Leadership Behaviors for Site-Based Management Objectives

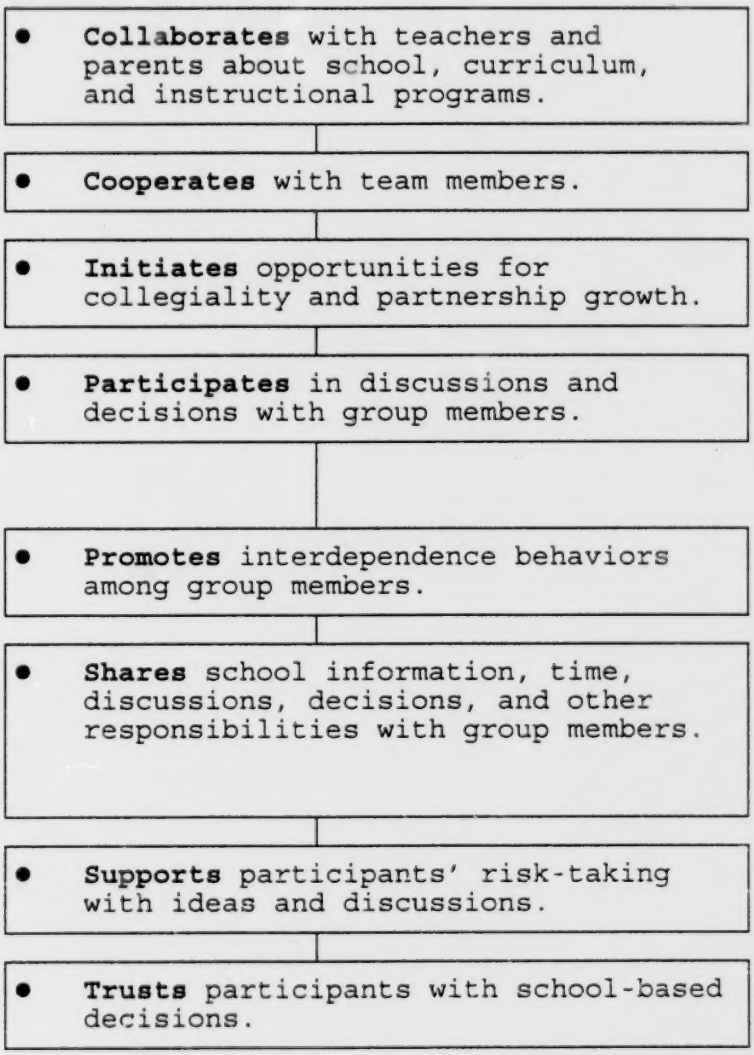
Earlier leadership behavior studies showed leadership behaviors shaping the organizational structure (Halpin, 1956). Site-based leadership roles strongly suggest school leaders must learn how to function differently in participatory environments. This means they have to demonstrate democratic and interactive styles of leadership with all participants in the system. Therefore, school leaders have to be prepared to learn a new set of behaviors to help all participants in the system accomplish restructuring goals.

It is well documented throughout the educational organization and administration literature that school leaders are the nucleus of school effectiveness. It is further supported that what leaders do is equally important. Again, employing Hemphill's (1958) theory of administrative leadership, behavior changes with respect to its environment. Since leadership role is a by-product of behaviors, what school leaders do is critical for site-based success. To complement the leadership roles cited above, a set of leadership behaviors must be developed and applied. These leadership behaviors support members in the organization, and they integrate and connect people to one another and to the organization's mission, goals, and objectives. As Leithwood (1992) recognized, leadership styles of behaviors should be considered to determine site-based implementation.

SUPPORTIVE BEHAVIORS THAT INTEGRATE AND CONNECT PEOPLE TO SITE-BASED MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

- **Encouraging** people to participate in school-based decisions.
- **Empowering** teachers and parents to lead and participate.
- **Facilitating** teachers and parents with decision-making skills
- **Involving** teachers and parents in discussions and decisions.
- **Supporting** participants' ideas and decisions.
- **Supporting** participants' change, innovation, creativity, efficacy, growth, and productivity.

INTERACTIVE AND INTERDEPENDENT BEHAVIORS THAT PROMOTE COLLEGIALITY AND TEAM PARTNERSHIPS


• **Collaborates** with teachers and parents about school, curriculum, and instructional programs.
• **Cooperates** with team members.
• **Initiates** opportunities for collegiality and partnership growth.
• **Participates** in discussions and decisions with group members.
• **Promotes** interdependence behaviors among group members.
• **Shares** school information, time, discussions, decisions, and other responsibilities with group members.
• **Supports** participants' risk-taking with ideas and discussions.
• **Trusts** participants with school-based decisions.

School Leadership Retraining

This process of learning new leadership behaviors may take time, because most school leaders have been trained to perform bureaucratically (Tye, 1992). Their administrative programs have prepared them to assume centralized roles in educational settings. As Sizer (1987) noted, regularities with routines and activities are so familiar that they are habitual. Shifting from authoritative to democratic styles of governance is difficult. Moreover, asking principals to relinquish power to teachers without decision-making preparation is pejorative.

Advocates of site-based must first realize that merely changing the organizational structure does not authenticate behavioral change. Behaviors for both school leaders and teachers need redefining and reconceptualizing for site-based management models (Bimber,1993; Timar, 1989; Tye, 1992).

Conclusions

If contemporary restructuring reforms associated with site-based management are to be effective, attention must be focused upon school leaders' roles and behaviors. As some educators are beginning to recognize this significant leadership dimension, school leadership roles need to be redefined and reconceptualized within site-based frameworks (David, 1989; Timar & Kirp, 1989; Tye, 1992). Therefore, university-based professors should be charged with the preparation and licensure of the next question of educational leaders: What leadership roles and behaviors are needed

to accomplish SBM objectives? Finally, the authors assert four school leadership postulations that should serve as precursors for successful site-based management systems.

- School leadership roles be redefined for site-based management congruency.
- School leaders' must be committed to learn a new set of behaviors.
- Preparation programs for school leaders must be a catalyst for the leadership change that promotes restructuring reforms.
- State and local educational policies must be consistent with site-based efforts. Policies must facilitate school leaders with employing democratic styles of leadership.

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